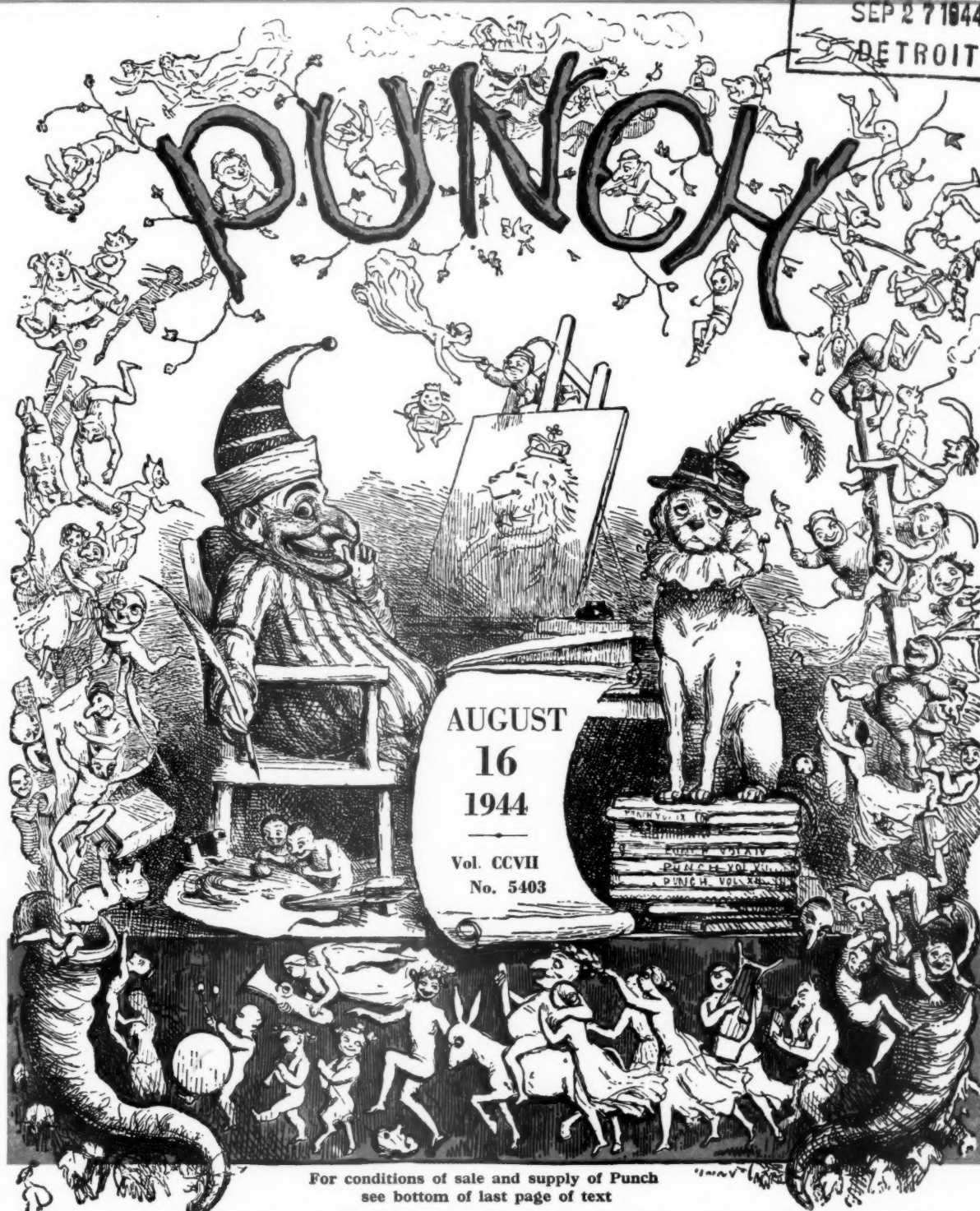


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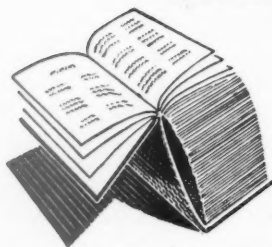
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When I can get it, I prefer*

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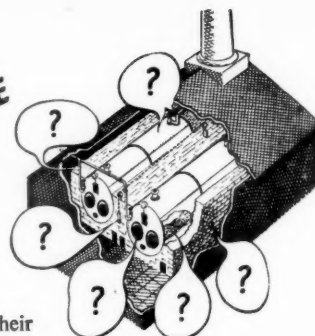
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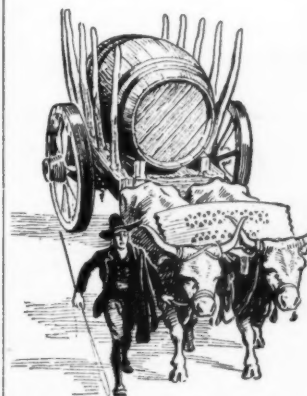


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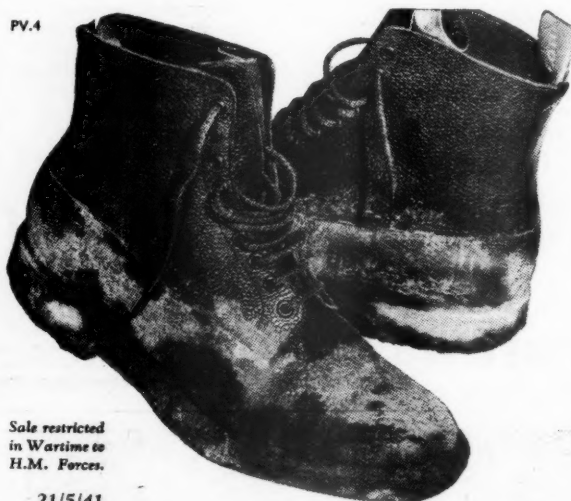
soups, and meat extracts, because they are easily digested. Clinical tests, conducted at a famous research institute, have shown that Brand's Essence is outstandingly effective in raising the metabolic rate. It raises it quicker and sustains it longer than any home-made broth or any accepted meat preparation.

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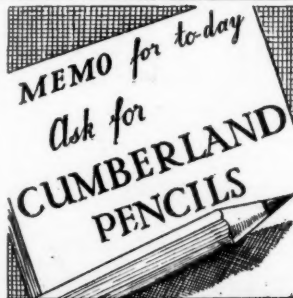
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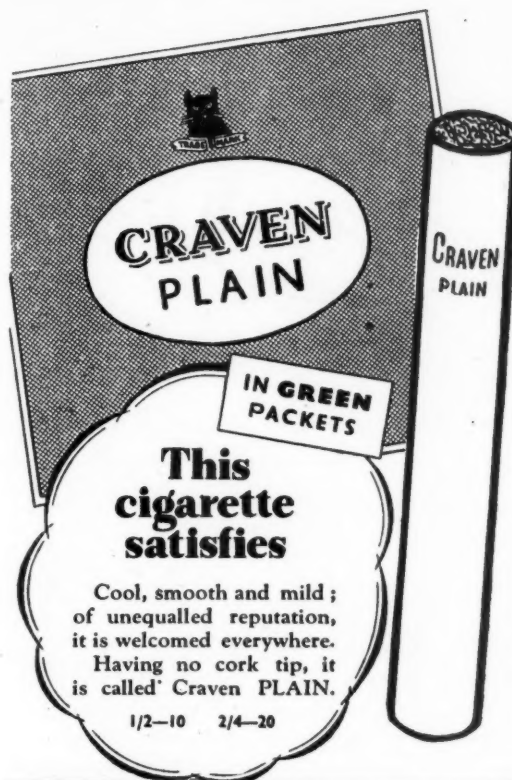
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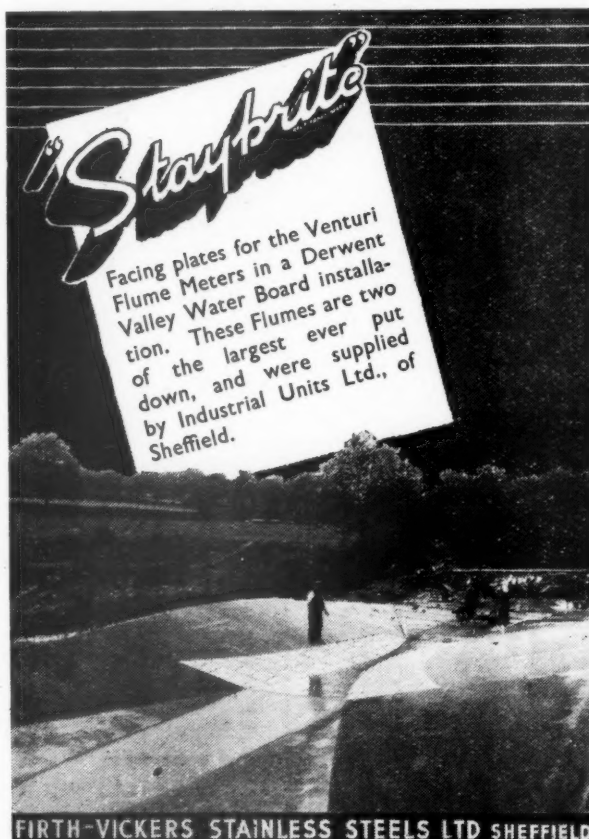
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OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCVII No. 5403

August 16 1944

Charivaria

It may be true, as Hitler suggests, that certain German generals constitute a menace to future security, but it is the corporals posterity is keeping a really uneasy eye on.

We are assured that Ensa will continue for some time after the war. Then jokes will gradually be demobilized according to their length of service.

Ribbentrop is said to have supplied Goering with champagne which has not been paid for by Goering either.

A portfolio containing important military documents was recently found on a London pavement. Surely the car shortage isn't so pronounced as all that?



"Is it possible to acquire personality?" asks a writer. Well, some shopkeepers have got very little else.

Whichever way events go in East Prussia now, they are sure to run into reporters.

"My milkman used to have the most fantastic war theories but he doesn't call now," says a correspondent. Oh, well. There's always Stockholm.

Goebbels officially announced that the Fuehrer's only injuries were slight burns on the forehead. There was a sigh of relief from the world's cartoonists on learning that the forelock had been mercifully spared.



It is pointed out that during a Parliamentary recess members can be recalled very quickly if anything important happens. Older M.P.s can remember the days when nothing important would dare to happen during a recess.

"In Guam the Americans took a mountain over to the South." *Broadcast news.*
Wonderful things, these bulldozers!

A neutral correspondent says that Berliners are accustomed to hearing rifle shots in the city and take no notice. Realizing of course that they are merely part of the traditional military ceremonial known as the Changing of the Bodyguard.

A rural columnist believes that the waterwheel will return. He is not, however, the first man to observe that the side which goes down must come up.

"PLATINUM ENGAGEMENT RING, 3 diamonds. £30; no offers."—*Advt.*
Hard luck—but it's still leap-year.



A German general, arrested for complicity in the Hitler bomb plot, was given a revolver in his cell and asked if he could have a copy of *Mein Kampf*. Later he was found bored stiff.

In view of the prevailing conditions we understand that the olive branch operating between Helsinki and Moscow is now to be fitted with jet propulsion.

Nazi leaders have purchased cattle ranches in the Pampas. Hitler's advisers, however, are having the utmost difficulty in interesting him in the principles of the lariat.

Of Amazons

I HAVE just been told by a daily paper that "auburn-haired Lieutenant Alexandra Boiko, Commander of a heavy Voroshilov tank, has received the Order of the Patriotic War, First Class"; and that her husband Ivan, who has also been decorated, serves under her command as driver of this stark machine. Have I any complaints to make? None, rude reader, except about that terrible word or compound word "auburn-haired." I will engage that it did not occur in the U.S.S.R. Gazette which awarded Alexandra her well-deserved ribbon. It was some inquisitive Western journalist, I can wager, who ferreted out with fatuous romanticism the colour of Alexandra's hair, and it is just the kind of thing at which we feminists rightly grumble.

Am I to read in the story of some British battle twenty years from to-day that "laughing, dark-eyed, dimpled Lieutenant-General Ada Robinson, D.S.O., who broke the pivotal hinge of the enemy's key-point, and thrust it backwards with the tri-pronged crowbar of her flailing assault, has a batman also named Robinson. His name is Bill. He is her husband"?

I sincerely hope not.

"Interviewed by our correspondent, Corporal Robinson said simply, 'Yes, oh, yes. We were married on my last long leave. She outsings the nightingale. She walks in beauty like the night. I am just about to press her trousers. Her hair is darker than the raven's wing.'"

All this has nothing to do with the grim business of battle nor the Order of the Day. Let O.C. troops Millie Tonkins, who has enveloped a hedgehog or shattered a wall of steel, have blue eyes and a little head sunning over with curls; be clad in the beauty of a thousand stars, and make the bright world dim; or let her on the other hand be as homely as a lamp-post and as bald as a coot. We feminists do not care. We want to be rid of this sickly kind of chivalry when it has nothing to do with the business in hand. We will not have a private inditing a sonnet to his sergeant-mistress's eyebrow when he ought to be getting along with a sanitary fatigue. No soldier should have a pin-up picture of his girl company commander in his dugout or his barrack-room. Such things are an insult to the warrior-women of the world to-day, and the world to come.

I am not wrong, I think. There are precedents of course for this kind of sentimentalism. But they belong, I believe, to an age of mythology or of chivalry, when fighting was not so scientific nor so mechanical as it has now become.

You shall drag up against me in vain the story of the nymph Camilla who helped Turnus against the Trojan army under Aeneas. Of this lady it was written (and I quote from the English translation in Mr. Bohn's excellent library, because *you* could not translate the Latin): "Not to the distaff or the work-basket of Minerva had she accustomed her female hands." Far, oh, far otherwise. "And soon as the infant with the first prints of her feet had marked the grass," her father "loaded her hands with pointed javelins and from the shoulders of the little girl hung a bow and arrows. Instead of ornaments of gold for her hair, instead of being arrayed in a long trailing robe, a tiger's hide hung over her back down from her head. Even then with tender hand she flung childish darts, and whirled round her head a smooth-thonged sling, and struck down a Stymonian crane or white swan. Many matrons through the Tuscan towns in vain wished her for their daughter-in-law." Why, I can't imagine. A more tiresome

addition to a little family gathering in Northern Italy it would be difficult to discover. Yet so it was.

"Amidst heaps of slain the Amazon Camilla, armed with a quiver, proudly prances over the field . . . and now with her hand in showers tough javelins she throws, now with unwearied hand she snatches her sturdy halberd." Poor Tuscan son-in-law. He would have to carry that sturdy halberd, I suppose. But it was not to be. Camilla fell on the foughten field. A man called Aruns kept pursuing her all over the place in a chariot, waiting for his chance; and after a prayer to Apollo, several lines long and scanning perfectly, sent from his hand a spear which gave "a whizzing sound" through the air, and caused both armies to "turn their attention and direct their eyes to the queen." The spear did its deadly work, and drank deep the virgin blood, whereupon Aruns, "stunned with joy and mingled fear," ran away. But not successfully. The vengeance of Diana was upon him. One of her nymphs rather unfairly intervened and smartly shot him down. Camilla meanwhile had "reclined her drooping neck and head subdued by death, and with a groan her life indignant fled to the shades. Then indeed a prodigious outcry strikes the golden stars." And no wonder. She was a very regrettable casualty.

But I submit that all this has little or nothing to do with Alexandra Boiko. It belongs to the realm of fantasy. And I make my submission with the more confidence because of this same Camilla it is recorded (also in the language authorized by Mr. Bohn) that "even over the topmost stalks of standing corn she could have lightly skimmed, nor once had hurt the tender ears in her career, or along the main suspended on the heaving surge could glide nor in the liquid plain dip her nimble feet."

You might perhaps write the latter part of this sentence about a lady equipped with an amphibious landing craft, but not the former part about a lady in command of a Voroshilov tank. It would be much better for the prospect of this year's European harvest if you could. All honour then to Alexandra Boiko, and if Ivan, her husband, owing to some domestic squabble about cooking or washing up, refuses to drive straight at a key-point or crash through a cordon of iron, let him be put upon a charge-sheet and have his stripes removed. But let us leave out her auburn hair. Enough to hope that amid the roar of pincers and the hail of hinges, no German anti-tank gunners will remember how to pray, in perfect hexameters, to Apollo.

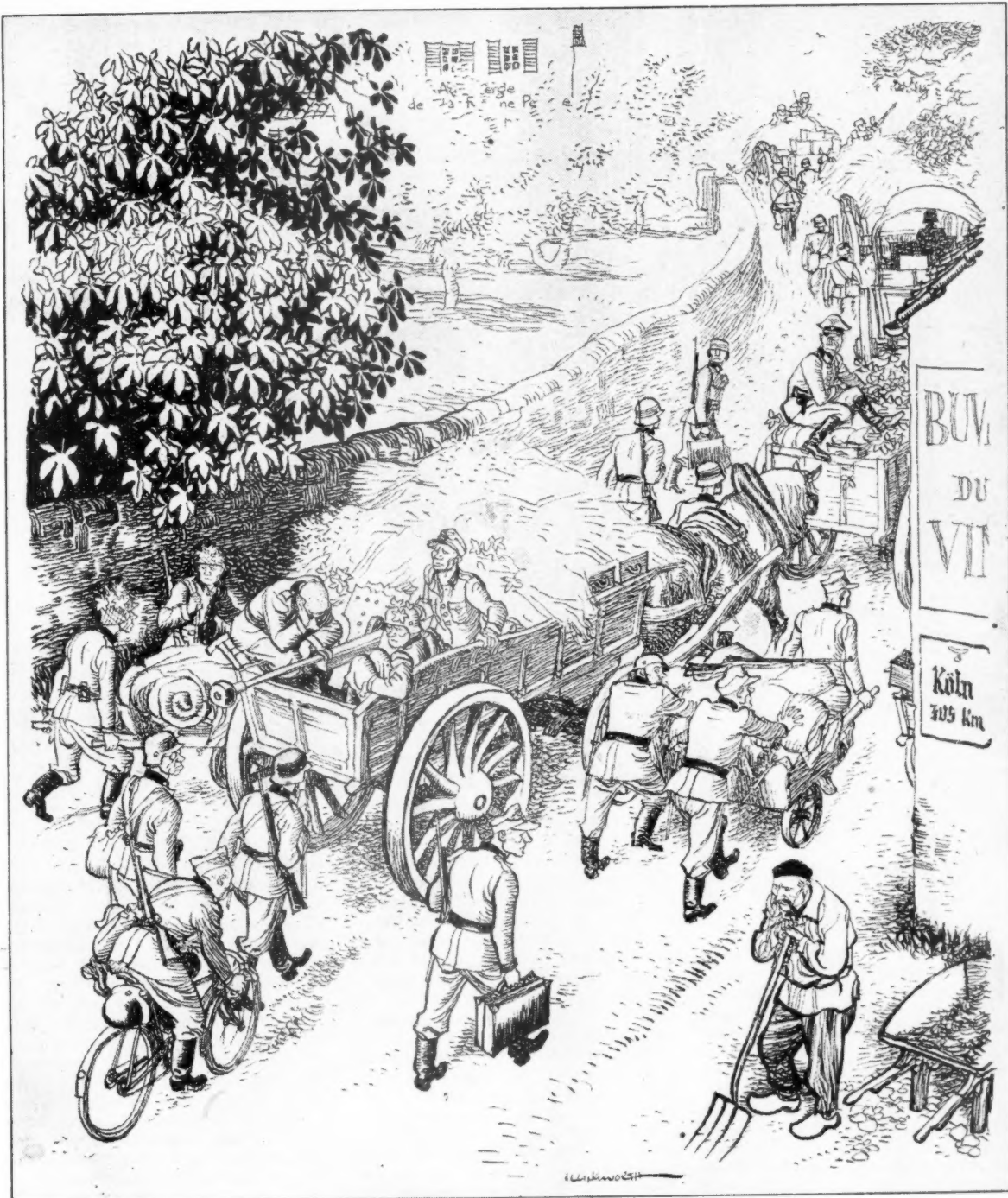
EVOE.

"When spring is over, the summer air is fragrant with the scent of millions of roses. Everywhere one sees them. In front of Parliament House there are thousands of buses, along the streets there are hundreds more. They climb over archways, they toss gay heads from tennis court fences, they peep in friendly fashion from private gardens. They herald in the autumn, with her harvest of scarlet and gold; her lovely hawthorn trees crimson with clusters of rich berries; her berried shrubs; her pin oaks a blaze of scarlet against the golden beauty of poplar trees."—*N.Z. weekly*.

That's enough, now. Fares, please!

Things That Might Have Been Better Expressed

"When the conductress spoke sharply to him, he struck her on the face. Later he apologised, and said that although he had been married for 27 years, he had never struck a woman before." *Evening Standard*.



HERRENVOLK HOME



Seelince

"Damn nuisance—my watch gains!"
 "You're lucky—mine loses!"

The Practice of Journalism

THIS article might well have been called "The Very Frequent Use of Coal-Cutters on Inclined Seams." It might even have been given the promising title "A Plea For Staggered Sundays." But in journalism it is a golden rule that second thoughts are not best. (Please overlook that hideous ungrammatical superlative.) The sensible journalist never reads what he has written: neither does a stupid journalist. They both read what the sub-editors have to say on the same subjects.

It should never be forgotten that literature and journalism are poles apart. When I joined the staff of the *Diurnal Tidings* (Incorporating the

Ceramist's Courier) I had big ideas. I shall never forget my first brush with the editor. I was methodically revising an article I had written on the decline of Australian cricket when he asked me what the blank I thought I was doing. "I am kicking out the geese," I said, echoing the words of the poet Tennyson. "There are too many 'Ss' in my last paragraph."

The chief's face blackened with rage and a squiggly blue vein on his left temple started to vibrate.

"Say that again," he barked.

I said it again.

"Listen, young fellow," he said, "you are here to write articles, not *belles lettres*. Cut the cackle and get to the Aussies."

It was a lesson I never forgot.

Reporters should never be confused with leader-writers. The latter are people who write in the left-hand

columns of the middle pages what reporters have written on other pages. Leading articles lie half-way between literature and journalism. One of the most successful men I ever knew was a leader-writer called Dooks of the *Reliable Source* of Worcester. His method was interesting and subtle. He used to sprinkle his articles very thoroughly with quotations from badly written reports so that his own words, by comparison, seemed to the reader to be the very summit of literary perfection. The marked improvement in the standard of Government publications (during the last decade) cost him his reputation and his job.

A "ghost" is a writer whose articles are published under the names of celebrities. The reasons for this are obscure. It may be that a celebrity is incapable of writing as well as the public thinks he ought to write; but it

should be noticed that once a ghost becomes famous he seldom fails to employ the services of a junior ghost. Bacon was a successful ghost for many years but his later works were written by a young man named Tomlinson.

The paper for which I write has no war correspondent and is not likely to have one until there is a pretty clear indication that hostilities are about to cease. The editor seems to have no idea what false economy is, but his excuses are clever. I cannot be spared from the office; I am not accredited; I should get lost; I do not speak Breton . . . he has a new one every day. On July 20th I was told to pack my bag and to stand at the ready. On July 23rd I was sent north to interview a delinquent Bevin boy, and I knew that the revolt in the German Army had been suppressed.

Nothing, however, would induce me to divulge the name of the paper. Anonymity is a first principle of successful journalism.

Lady Addle's Domestic Front

Bengers, Herts, 1944

MY DEAR, DEAR READERS,
—Continuing her share in these reminiscences, Mipsie writes:

Blanche wants me to write about banquets, but though I suppose no woman in Europe has had a wider experience of these than myself, I cannot contemplate my memories without some bitterness of heart when I think of the miseries I suffered from official banquets at Ekaterinbog during the time when I was married to my third husband, Prince Fedor Ubetzkoi. Oh, the agony of mind and spirit at the long tedious affairs; the food—except the caviare, which was wonderful, being in every colour: blue, green, red, white, gold, as well as black—being so unpalatable to me that I would make a pretence of toying with eighteen or twenty courses and leave the rest. Then the strange barbarous customs emphasized my utter loneliness. It is considered, for instance, most ill-bred to pay court to wives in Ekaterinbog—only the unmarried women receive attention—so that I would have to sit by and watch Irina, my plain, hateful step-daughter, loaded with flowers and compliments, while I was treated as only a paid companion or an ex-lord mayor's wife would have been treated in my father's house.

Then the endless formalities depressed me, for I have ever loved simplicity and freedom, and my only joy was to escape it all, plead illness, and have dinner served to me quite alone . . . except for Mich (Fedor's brilliant and handsome twenty-five-year-old son, Prince Michel) in my little silver-and-blue boudoir which I christened "Love-in-a-Mist"—I always call my pet rooms after flowers. . . . How these dinners—when they became known about—shocked the stiff court set! . . . Yet the only time when Irina, in her jealous fury, burst into our sanctuary, all she found was Mich and me sitting on a couch in front of the fire, playing cat's-cradle with my petticoat ribbons! But even then she dared to say things which cut me to my stepmother's heart, though I said nothing in return, judging gentleness to be the best answer to malice. In fact from that day onwards, I never spoke to her again.

I have always adored childish games and fancies (I have introduced "Sardines" into five royal households—and what a success it has been too!), just as it is the child in me that loves the sparkle of diamonds . . . the faery gleam of platinum. This elfin streak in my character has often been misunderstood and sometimes got me into hot water; and I remember, in this connection, one special time when I was staying—before the last war—at the Imperial Court of Germany, which was even more formal than Ekaterinbog. There was a very rich and dashing man, Count von Sauerkraut, who had a great reputation for sending little *billets-doux* to his lady friends. I thought it would be fun to see if this were true, so during a state banquet one night I wrote, by way of a non-committal opening, "Are you the handsome Count von Sauerkraut?" screwed the note into a ball, and had it slipped into one of his oysters in place of the real pearl which the Emperor, as a charming gesture, had ordered in every guest's plate. (I had the Count's real pearl removed and brought to me, to make the deception complete.) He replied "I am handsome only if you find me so." The note was cunningly folded to look like one of the almond water-lilies floating in our *consommé*. I next scribbled "Handsome is as handsome does," and saw it deftly inserted in between his *foie gras* and its aspic covering.

Then came a pause, while the Count kept looking towards me as though weighing something in his mind. At length came his answer, nestling under the pastry lid of my *vol-au-vent*, "Command me." My heart leapt at

the words. I replied in French "*Je ne sais pas commander un inconnu*," which message was neatly folded in an ortolan's wing. His answer, curled, oh, so tightly, into a fragment of spaghetti, was "Where can I see you alone?" I replied, giving him the whereabouts of my suite, but, alas, the note, though exquisitely disguised as a cream cone, never reached its destination. Unnoticed by both of us, his wife, who was seated four places away from him on the same side (I was opposite), had observed the whole drama, and now, when the tray of cream cones was handed to her, instead of taking the one intended for her, she reached beyond and helped herself to the sweet which should have been her husband's. With dilated eyes of horror I watched the Countess unfold and read my message, then, with one triumphant, mocking look at me, she deliberately swallowed the note! I never saw either husband or wife again. As always, what was only innocent fun on my part was wilfully misconstrued by a jealous woman. These are the thorns which the English rose—if she is beautiful—has to endure.

Supper . . . How can I write of that delicious and romantic meal? On looking back in my diaries I find I have received ninety-three proposals during supper, nearly 50 per cent. of them being for marriage. It can be readily understood therefore how hard I find it to speak of these precious moments, which must involve the names of the highest in the land. Yet memories haunt me . . . the gay suppers during a ball, the more serious ones which one would sit out. The brilliant supper-parties after the opera or the ballet, when my friends used to say they did not know which sparkled most, my jewels or my wit. Most dear of all, the private-room suppers . . . shaded lights, special flowers, wonderful food and wines. Ah, those private rooms of yesteryear! What has befallen you now? Your *raison-d'être* must surely be gone—for how can a man drink champagne out of the clumsy shoe of an A.T.S. officer? Or pin camellias on the serge bosom of a warden? Or wind pearls through the cropped hair of a land girl? And the aftermath of supper, what of that? The last tube home instead of the waiting limousine. Fifty common cigarettes instead of a jewelled cigarette-case. A few savings certificates instead of a block of oil shares . . . These, to me, are the horrors of war.

Yours sincerely and beautifully,
MILLCENT BRISKETT.

M. D.

At the Pictures

PERSONAL IRRITATIONS

THE current fashion in British-film stories seems calculated to arouse all my latent peevishness. Never were the English so self-conscious, or so much encouraged to be, and "Aren't we English charmingly absurd!" appears to be the message of nearly every British picture. Our capacity for self-approval is, to be sure, infinite; but there must surely come a time sooner or later when we tire of precisely that indirect form of self-approval which is encouraged by such works as *English Without Tears* (Director: HAROLD FRENCH). This tries, as the title and the publicity indicate, to repeat the success of *French Without Tears*; but without Anthony Asquith as director, and with a story less fresh, less dramatic, less homogeneous and less coherent. The auditorium rings with the delighted laughter of an audience proud to be displaying not so much its appreciation of English comedy as its sporting spirit, an audience happily complacent in its certainty that no other nation would laugh at itself like this, comfortably sure that these are the funny things about the English because it has been told so (by the English) innumerable times before.

Well, after all, this is a harmless little piece and there is no point in being too hard on it. It gives us the butler joke, the love-of-wild-birds joke, the tea-shoppe joke, the clumsy-lover joke, the distrust-of-foreigners joke, and the one about the funny English language, which contains the words *sesquipedalian* and *phantasmagoria*. Practically every character in sight comes under the heading of "nice people," and is played suitably; but ROLAND CULVER in a comparatively small part contrives to be

memorable as well as amusing, as he usually does.

It seems odd that the producers of *Going My Way* (Director: LEO McCAREY) should have taken such

language of the early nineteen-thirties called *crooning*; people in this section will stay away from a Bing Crosby picture in any event, because they ain't got rhythm. There is also the section that can do without the story about the priest who reforms the bad boys. To have taken such pains to drive all these sourpusses into one phalanx of disapproval by casting BING CROSBY as the singing priest who reforms the bad boys by making them sing seems curious behaviour for business men. But it will probably turn out in the end, I admit, that the extra fans of the story attracted against their habit to tolerate the singing, and the extra fans of the singing attracted against their habit to tolerate the story, have made *Going My Way* exceptionally profitable considered in either category.

I regret it myself. I think that to use a good flippant light comedian in a part like this is great waste. Certainly Mr. CROSBY is good as *Father O'Malley*; he is an intelligent actor and he makes

the part not merely inoffensive but pleasant. But . . . roll on *Road to Utopia*, where he is back with BOB HOPE.

The outstanding figure here is BARRY FITZGERALD as the elderly priest the fortunes of whose poor parish *Father O'Malley* is sent to revive. (This situation in fact is the basis of the plot; the reform-of-the-bad-boys business is only one of the more regrettable episodes.) Mr. FITZGERALD has a fine time as this rich and crusted character, and his performance is worth seeing as a variegated bit of virtuosity. The piece is full of other compensations (there is room, for it runs over two hours, which seems to me very much too long for this kind of thing); but I should not feel really safe in recommending it to anybody but a simple-hearted sentimentalist with a taste for light music.

R. M.



J.H.DOWD

[English Without Tears]

ENGLISH WITH BUTLER

Sir Cosmo Brandon	ROLAND CULVER
Joan	PENELOPE WARD
Lady Christabel	MARGARET RUTHERFORD
Gilbey	MICHAEL WILDING

trouble to antagonize simultaneously two well-known and well-defined sections of the public. There is the section, which I believe to be vocal out of all proportion to its size, that hates what is still (in the out-of-date



J.H.D.

[Going My Way]

HAT SLANT

Father Fitzgibbon	BARRY FITZGERALD
Father O'Malley	BING CROSBY

Must I be Air-Minded, Father?

MUST I be air-minded, Father?
I am so tired of the sky.
Am I always to move about
In streamlined containers,
Seeing nothing but cloud,
Hearing nothing but roar,
And feeling nothing but sick?
Men in well-pressed trousers talk about
being air-minded
As if it was a substitute for religion.
Aeroplanes are more sacred than buses,
my son,
Because they go faster.

Being air-minded is O.K. in war-time,
Father,
And I say three cheers for Bert Harris,
And snooks to the Bp. of Chich.
But the way I look at it is this,
The more air-minded I am now
The sooner I needn't be air-minded
ever again.
Speed is Progress, my son.
I thought everyone understood that by
now.

I may be a nihilist, Father,
But I am against the canonization of
the Wrights.
I like going slowly.
I hate telephones and I love getting
letters.
I like trains and ships.
I think civilization left off
Where the petrol engine began.
When I go places when the shooting
is over
I shall want to smell sea,
And hear waves slapping,
And porters starting revolutions
While the luggage is dropped in the
harbour,
And air hissing from brakes at places
like Châlons-sur-Marne.
I shall want to break the long fast
In rocketing dining-cars,
Deuxième service! Ting-ting! Ting-
ting!
With red wine spilling from tumblers,
And waiters dancing like Fred Astaire,
And the opening chapter of a different
crime novel burgeoning in each
compartment.
Then when I get there
I shall feel I am someone who has
been somewhere,
And not just an unsensing body with
hot pins in its ears in Seat No. 12,
Expressly delivered in a sealed tube
Via the Moon,
With paper-bags thrown in.
Sssh, my boy!



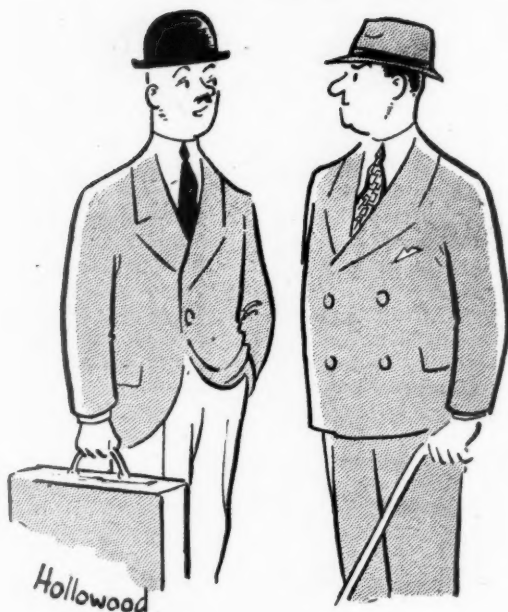
*"I don't care if it is a special train for children evacuees,
Miss—you're NOT to announce it as a puff-puff."*

*Before the war they built more and more
costly ships
So that Huge Business could reach New
York two hours sooner
And have that much extra time for the
discussion of how valuable it
would be
To reach New York two hours sooner
still.
That only goes to show!*

*If only we could drown all the
scientists, Father,
Life could be so slow and sweet.
Cruises in the stratosphere don't
tempt me,*

Nor does the thought of the People's
Helicopter
Nestling on my lawn
In monthly instalments
Give me anything but a pain in the
neck.
I am so very sick of talking undercars,
Father,
And propping up bars with dihedral,
And eating tinned pork in slipstream,
And playing darts with one engine
shot up.
Do you really think I absolutely
must be
Permanently
Air-minded?

ERIC.



"Fortunately, I live just a yard or two the wrong side of Southern England."

Luck of the Farm

... old, unhappy, far-off pigs,
And cattle long ago.

A TIDY farm. In cold and heat
I've watched the seasons pass,
Admired the wurzel and the wheat
Though in the main it's grass;
Cattle and sheep have come and gone
And many a hog grown fat;
One sole lone thing has battled on
Unchanged—the farmer's hat.

An ancient wreck, I'm told, when erst
It rode his youthful brow;
Unseemly when I saw it first—
I won't describe it now;
Sunshine and tempest, snow and rain,
Have changed it not a scrap,
Barring perchance a deeper stain,
A richer tone, mayhap.

Yet once it had its hour of pride
And maybe lured the eye
Of the first owner's future bride
Who was impressed thereby,
And, grateful for the prize it won,
He wore it as a charm
Till it descended to his son
A mascot of the farm.

A thought too fanciful, you hold,
Nor can I disagree
But, though perhaps a trifle bold,
It's good enough for me;
It has a fine poetic ring
Nor can one otherwise
Account for such a mangy thing
Affronting still the skies.

And may it bless the farmer's land
And bring him naught but good
Unless it falls to pieces, and
I don't see why it should,
And when in time his heir succeeds—
And all must come to that—
May he too flaunt about his meads
That villainous old hat.

DUM-DUM.

Poetry

POETRY is a big subject. The more aggressively poetic of my readers may think it too big for me to do justice to here; my answer is that justice is exactly what I do hope to do to it. I want to define poetry's place in the world, or more accurately the world's place round poetry, and I shall do it without bringing in quotations, as my readers can see by the way the print is all wogged together.

Poetry is written by poets—let us get that straight—and the public has always had a perfectly clear idea of poets. Poets have long hair and leave their shoelaces untied because they have broken them off too short to do up. They wear bright-coloured but dirty clothes, and an expression of savage thought because they are waiting to be inspired. When they are inspired they stop and jot down something on the back of a stolen envelope, but they save their real work until three in the morning, so that they can do it by the light of a candle stuck in a hock-bottle. It is a gloomy picture, and one the public takes quite a pleasure in. Psychologists, as you might expect, can explain it. They say it is repressed jealousy, and it is no good the public saying it is not. All average people have a funny feeling, when confronted by some tradition like a view at sunset, that they want to hit back with a poem. Being average people, they can only take comfort from the thought that *their* shoelaces do up. (If they are poets, of course, then they can remember suddenly that they have a lot of letters to write and go home and have a nice read.) The only other thing I want to say about poets from the public's point of view is that, although the public has such a clear idea of what poets are like, it is reluctant to admit that there is such a thing as a living poet. It will only admit that there are people alive who write what they consider poetry because they think they are poets, but what they are writing is not really poetry because it has not been written before.

Now for poetry itself. Poetry rhymes, unless it does not, when it is called blank verse. There are also certain types of rhymed poetry which rhyme only at the end of every other line, the remaining lines ending with ordinary words, and the public can never get over its slight feeling of shy pleasure when it reads this sort of poetry and realizes that if it itself wants to write a bit of verse things need

only be half as difficult as they might. I must add, in fairness, that the average public has only to have a shot at it to see its mistake; because, to the average public, to sit quietly in front of a blank piece of paper is to produce nothing more than a wave of panic, a fierce desire to get back to the real world the other side of the door. Poetry, being written in separate lines, is printed in separate lines, whatever the printer may feel about the space round the edges, and each line begins with a capital letter. I know that some modern poetry does not begin its lines with a capital letter, but then some people eat off the floor to show they do not eat off tables. The reaction of the public to a poem whose lines begin with small letters may be gauged by its positive joy when the poor poet is caught out by a full stop at the end of the line before. Poetry is also printed with some lines indented, but the public does not worry about this unless it has to copy a poem out, when it finds itself up against a law of nature it did not know about before. Generally speaking, the longer the lines of a poem, the more respectful, or oppressed, the public will feel. Once let the paper round get the better of the print inside, psychologists say, and a poem will have to fight for its prestige; and they add that they wonder if modern poets quite realize this.

Poetry, I was saying, is something which was written before, and the more before the better, because the longer ago it was written the longer the public has collectively had to learn it. Learning by heart is one of the most important aspects of poetry, as well as one of the best ways of keeping people quiet, so it is not surprising that we start learning poetry as soon as we go to school. People like to write letters to the papers complaining that we cannot appreciate poetry if we have to learn it by heart before we can appreciate it, because by the time we can it is then too late to learn it by heart. However that may be, it is true that the poems people learn at school are the ones they remember in later life; I mean they have only to come across one in a book years and years after to be struck with amazement that they had forgotten it all that time.

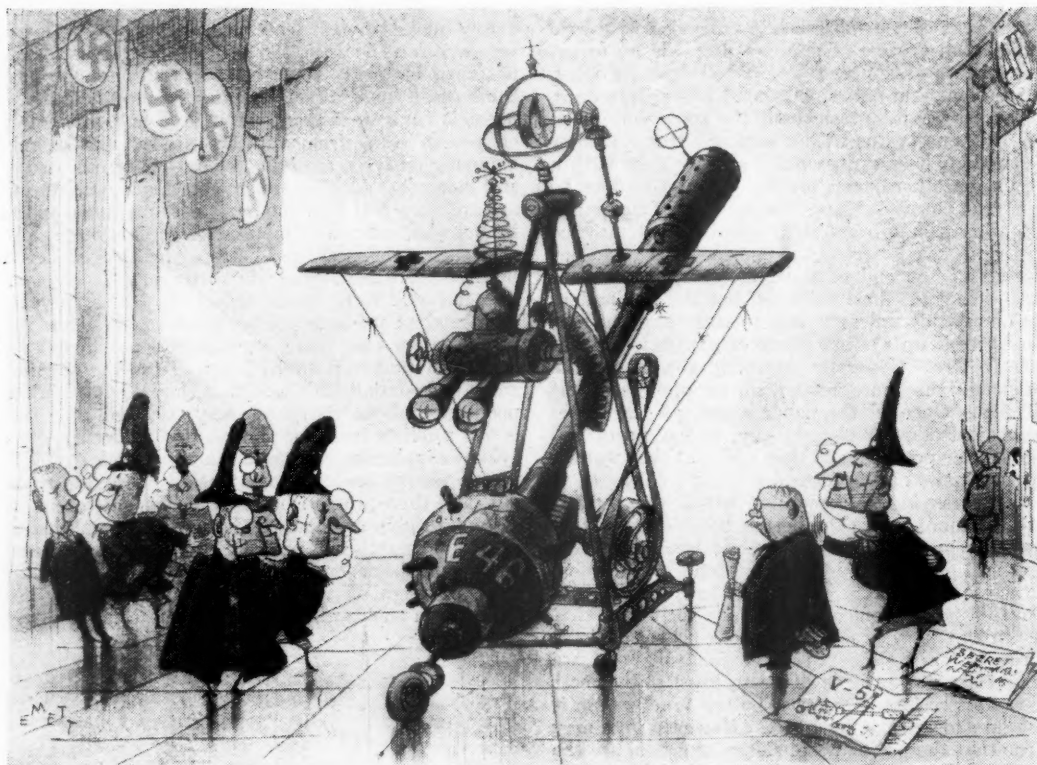
What, people infrequently ask, is the best way to learn a poem by heart? Well, the idea is to read it through until we find we can remember it all except a word here and there which we can look up from time to time to confirm we have still got it wrong. It does not matter very much, because the idea of learning poetry is to be able to call it to mind when most needed, which is when doing crossword puzzles; and the moral effect will be the same even if the word wanted is the one we can never remember, because we have only to say that we know it but can't remember it, and give a cry of recognition when someone else gets it. Apart from this, the great benefit of having a lot of poetry inside us is that we can recite it to ourselves when alone among strangers. Psychologists tell us that if we notice someone looking particularly remote and enraptured it would mean that that person is wondering what the next meal will turn out to be, and not, as we might imagine, thinking of some beautiful poem. Such is the power of poetry. As for reading poetry, it is interesting that a really good poem is apt to be read from the middle outwards, with several lines never getting read at all. Psychologists do not know why this is, but they point out as a clue that detective stories are read in a straight line from the first page to the last, and that it seems to prove that poetry-readers are the opposite of detective-story readers, or anyway at the time.

I don't think I have said quite enough about modern poetry, which as everyone knows, is the opposite of non-modern poetry in that it does not have to rhyme or scan

or take up an appreciable proportion of the page; nor does it have to be learnt by heart at school. It is difficult, the public feels, to see what modern poetry *does* have to do, except make anyone who reads it very sorry for anyone who writes it, because, the public thinks in its foolish way, life must be pretty tough if you mind enough about it to think up all those adjectives. It is safe to say that a modern poem is never read from the middle outwards; it is read, or rather seen, from directly above, the public's eye bouncing on to it, receiving a mud-pie of these adjectives, and retreating to clean itself up. Psychologists say they are not surprised that modern poetry is not as popular as it might be, and that if modern poets want to get anywhere with their public they had better space their adjectives out, because there is nothing like a row of adjectives to make you feel you have eaten too much. Also, psychologists add, modern poets might try throwing in a few foolproof rhymes here and there, in case the public did feel like learning a modern poem by heart. However, psychologists, who are essentially fair, add that they do not think modern poets care about the public anyway, and this, they say, is the public's fault for thinking of modern poets as not tying their shoelaces up; and this, the public say, is because of the poetry modern poets write. There seems no way out, and there we had better leave it; but to end up with I want to give my readers the psychologists' definition of a really established poet. Established poets are when two people speak simultaneously, hook their fingers together, wish and sign off with a poet's name; and any poet who gets by on such an occasion without comment has made the grade.



"Pasted?"



"Congratulations, Herr Professor! Our Fuehrer will now think up something for it to do."

The Ballad of Mr. Simpson's Putt

YOU've heard of Clive at Arcot,
Of Drake on Plymouth Hoe,
The men who fought at Minden,
The Light Brigade also,
Of Marlborough and Wellington
And Nelson, doubtless. But
Have you yet heard the epic tale
Of Mr. Simpson's putt?

The bomb fell down like lightning,
Precursor of the blast,
And Mr. Simpson on his face
Fell fifty times as fast.
Strong roared the gale about him,
There on the seventh green,
But when he rose upon his feet
No trace of fear was seen.

He wiped the worm-casts from his knees
And ardour filled his soul
For the honour of old England
And half-a-crown a hole,
And then his bold opponent
Looked like a stricken man,
When Mr. Simpson up and smote
That ball into the can.

Now oft adown the ages
The story will be told
(To Mr. Simpson's family)
Of how that putt was holed,
And with each repetition
"Twill go as stories will—
The bomb will fall much closer
And the putt grow longer still. E. S.



THE BRETON ONION-MAN

Maud's Children

MAUD, in her long feathered trousers, broods lovingly over her bantam chicks, counting them aloud (rather tiresomely) all day, one, two, three, four, five *and*, believe it or not, six!

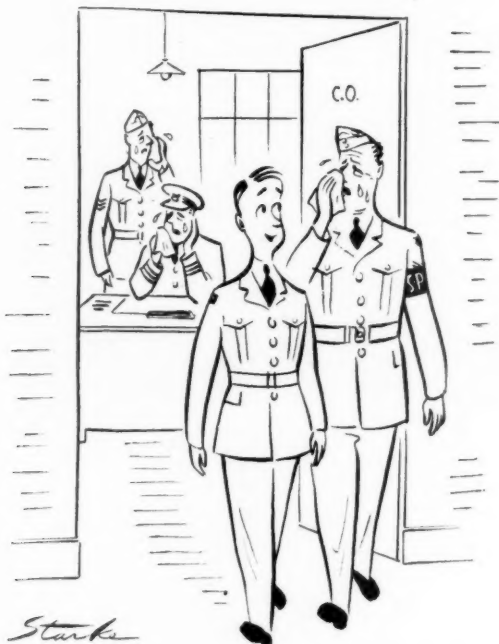
Their small brown velveteen bodies bounce about in aimless animation; they hop up and down, and scream things to each other in high-pitched voices trembling with indignation.

To judge from their state of turmoil, all are presumably catching last trains, as breathlessly, still shouting instructions, they race tripping over things, into the darkness of drains,

only to reappear half-crazed by the ghastly things they have nearly seen, to gallop, with smothering sobs into the soon-discovered ghastliness of the threshing machine.

With great difficulty they climb on to Maud's back, stagger groggily round, peer vertiginously over her wings and then closing their eyes, fall with a shrill shriek to the ground.

They spin and slip up and slither like a crowd of hysterical skaters, and, though I know they are dear Maud's children, they look like mentally deficient bumblebees in gaiters. V. G.



"Do you think I put up a good defence?"

WE pray that it may not be long before a European tyranny worse than Napoleon's crashes to its doom and we can look back at the time when Britain alone barred the way to the evil hordes and say again with

WILLIAM PITT

"England has saved herself by her exertions and Europe by her example."

We do not know how far distant that day is; but we do know that the needs of the Fighting Forces are greater than ever. They need everything we can give. Have you given all you can spare to **PUNCH COMFORTS FUND**? Every penny means that some fighting man somewhere can have more of the small comforts that mean so much. Send to-day to **PUNCH COMFORTS FUND**, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940

H. J.'s Dramatic Fragments

THIS Fragment, unlike its predecessors, was not so much a result as a cause. I was writing it in an arbour a friend had lent me as he wished to keep it aired, when my pencil broke. Although I was using a typewriter at the time this made me feel unprepared and aroused reflexes which had been conditioned into me when a Boy Scout, so I looked for a knife to sharpen it. The only one I could find was a curved knife used to eviscerate grape-fruit, and this was pinning a note to the wall. The writing on the note was of a low and wavering type and what it said was, "Armony, beware the Hides of March. Signed Anon. Post Scriptum: Dahn wive the Bank Rate." This friendly warning plainly merited a reward, but though I advertised, the writer never came forward, and the cost of advertising absorbed any possible profit from the Fragment, the bill coming in on the date predicted and thus proving that well-informed was what my correspondent was.

TITANIA WAS NO COOK.

(The scene is an exhibition of paintings.)

WALTER'S AUNT. No. 38, "The Matterhorn in Lent," by Billy Riggle. The *reductio ad absurdum* of atonality. No. 39...

POSTMASTER PREAM. I think that is rather a facile criticism.

WALTER'S AUNT. Nonsense. It's suggestive and illuminating. You're simply jealous because my mind works faster than yours. You stand in front of a picture for three minutes or even more and then say it has painterly qualities—unless it has already been sold, when you say it lacks them. No. 39, "Study in Yellow," by Mischa the Manx. A welcome return to pure colour.

POSTMASTER PREAM. But it's just a canvas evenly covered with yellow paint. I suppose you could say the brush-work is unobtrusive, but I can never remember whether that's a virtue or not.

WALTER'S AUNT. Don't waste time. No. 40, "Gears," by Brother Fortitude. Implicit.

POSTMASTER PREAM. As a criticism that is much too bald. **WALTER'S AUNT.** No, condensed but radio-active. I suppose it is what they call a construction, but it



"Early closing my foot! You MUST get some more. I don't want to be known as the PIEBALD Prince!"

doesn't look as if it would work. That is the worst of contemporary painters. They want to show their enthusiasm for machinery and still retain the reputation of being charmingly unpractical.

GIOVANNI. Ah, I'm sorry I have not been able to go with you round. Very interesting show, what. Very reasonable. Only ten guineas this one. Architectonic and signed by the artist twice. Want to buy, no?

WALTER'S AUNT. Press, I hope. Now go away and let me get on. No. 41, "Don Juan in Swansea," by A Lady Mayoress. It's time for a comparison. All pictures are either like Graham Sutherland or not. This, I think, is a not.

POSTMASTER PREAM. Hullo, George, new line?

GEORGE. Yes, Sprotter usually does the art, but Vincent has been promoted to the Cashier's department and so Sprotter's got the Zoo column and I'm taking over from him. Golly, I was tired of inquests. Any of the Cabinet been in?

POSTMASTER PREAM. No, only under-secretaries go to shows. Ministers go to exhibitions.

WALTER'S AUNT. No. 42, "Madge," by Austin Hall, B.A. (Hons.). Does the title refer to the child or the mule? Anyway, massively conceived.

POSTMASTER PREAM. Personally, I should refer here to the need for a return to Alma Tadema: he is one of the few painters who have not yet been returned to.

GEORGE. At a First Night people come up to you and tell you who they are. There does not seem much material here. Perhaps some of these pictures are subversive; there is a story anywhere if you look for it.

WALTER'S AUNT. No. 43, "Walls Have Ears," by Nedd. The last thin flicker of Surrealism. This has five; I particularly dislike the hairy one emerging from the third brick on the left.

GEORGE. Now, I like that. You can tell what it is meant to be.

WALTER'S AUNT. No. 44, "Nude in Baker's Shop," by Old Tom Widdett. If it's a Primitive it's good; if not, it's appalling.

POSTMASTER PREAM. What is the test?

WALTER'S AUNT. Thirty years as something else and not more than six lessons. Age under 12 or over 80 a great advantage.

GEORGE. The trouble is, as well as my article I've got to provide two paragraphs for the "Loungers' Log." There isn't even a diplomat to interview.

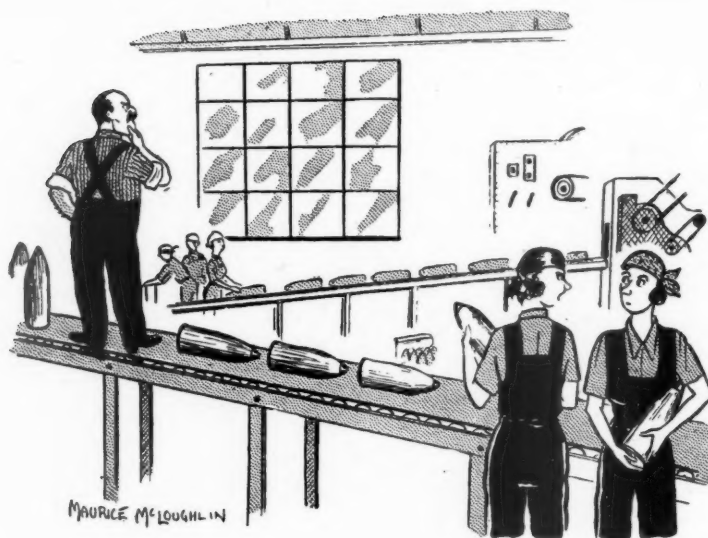
WALTER'S AUNT. Don't be so helpless, man. Of course, one of the pictures reminds you of a time when you actually did succeed in meeting somebody your editor considers it good for the public to have heard of. No. 45, "Portrait of the Artist by His Brother." (A STATUE comes to life)

STATUE. Why does everybody leave the sculpture till the end? I get so bored. (Stretches.)

WALTER'S AUNT. Very plastic.

FINIS

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"Look out—the foreman's coming round again."

Little Talks

MR. HOME SECRETARY, I have the honour to introduce a Joint Deputation of certain Associations and Bodies who at a recent meeting at the Asston Hall decided to approach you concerning certain post-war problems.

Yes, yes, Mrs. Busy, I am delighted to see, you. Continue.

The first problem is the Black-out.

Dear, dear, you've not come all this way to ask me to relax the black-out?

Quite the contrary. We want you—at least some of us want you—to keep it on.

But that is just what we are doing, in spite of a good deal of pressure. I'm glad to have your support.

You misunderstand me. I mean after the war.

After the war? Really, Mrs. Busy! May I ask why?

For my part, I represent the National Society for Self-Discipline. We are afraid that after the war there may be a great relaxation of control.

There certainly will. I have undertaken that.

Ah, but, Home Secretary, I think it is agreed in serious circles that controls shown to be beneficial in wartime may well be beneficial in peace. The lessons of war—

Certainly, Mrs. Busy; but I have yet to hear of any beneficial effects of the black-out.

The people go to bed earlier. They stay at home and read books. There is not so much late dancing and drinking. After the war, we fear, all this will begin again. The night-clubs—

I'm afraid I can't promise to retain the black-out in order to discourage night-clubs—for any other reason.

There are other reasons, of course. One is the saving of fuel. After the war, with our obligations to Europe, the shortage of coal will be acute. My Society have calculated that a substantial saving of coal would be effected—

Quite wrong. The saving of fuel is not really substantial. Indeed, at dusk and dawn the black-out causes a substantial waste of light—and fuel—in the homes—I think I see my old friend Mrs. Good, of the Public Morality Council. What have you to say to this proposal, Mrs. Good?

We are opposed to it, as it stands, of course. But we see that there is a good deal in what Mrs. Busy says: and we should be prepared to accept a compromise. That is, that the black-out should be retained in the main streets, thus discouraging long motor journeys, but not in the side-streets where kissing may occur. The parks and open spaces of course should be flood-lit.

But the parks will not be open.

They are open now. And that

reminds me, Home Secretary, we demand that the railings round the parks be restored at once.

That, I fear, is more a matter for the Minister of Supply. However, I will make a note of it.

Thank you.

Anything else?

We hope that the Government will not be precipitate in removing the mines and barbed wire from the beaches.

Good gracious me! Don't you want the people to get down to the sea and swim?

We are not opposed to swimming, provided the practice is properly supervised and controlled. Before the war there is no doubt that there was a good deal of licence. There was no standard costume. People lay about on the beaches in all sorts of postures with extremely scanty coverings. Cases even came to our notice where personnel of opposite sexes undressed on the same beach within a stone's-throw of each other. The long stretches of open beach, on the one hand, and the small secluded coves, on the other, made it almost impossible for our patrols to keep proper observation. Since the war, however, at least on the invasion coasts, we have been able to keep an eye on almost all the bathers. And if the system of limited beaches could be extended all round the coast bathing inspectors could be appointed for every beach, and an effective supervision maintained.

I see your difficulty, Mrs. Good. But I confess I'm a little doubtful about the mines.

We should not insist on the mines, Home Secretary, if the principle were accepted. But a little barbed wire would greatly help our work.

Well, I'll make a note of it. What next?

Next we wish to refer to a somewhat delicate matter, and that is the piece of sculpture called Eros.

What is the matter with that?

It is naked.

Is it? I never noticed. Yes, I suppose it is.

It is our business to notice such things. And yours, if I may say so. For some years now this undesirable figure has been decently concealed from the public view. In our opinion it would be a retrograde step to uncover it in the hour of victory.

Oh, come, I don't think it does much harm, does it? Would you like me to drape it, or what?

That is not the only point. We object to the whole conception. Piccadilly Circus, unhappily, is perhaps the most famous point in the capital—and

therefore in the Empire. It is the Mecca—I say again unhappily—of Dominion and Colonial troops, one of the first places to be visited by the Americans. It seems to us a shocking thing that when at last they find this celebrated corner of this Christian country they should see at the heart of it the naked figure of a pagan god—a god, moreover, with the name of Eros, and all that that stands for.

But, look here, Mrs. Good, Eros, after all, was the god of Love, wasn't he?

Not love, as we understand it, Home Secretary. Eros, I must remind you, is the noun of "erotic."

Well, suppose we call it "Cupid" instead. How would that do?

Cupid would be a shade less offensive. But even Cupid connotes "desire". No, Mr. Home Secretary, we have a more constructive proposal. Here, at this central and popular resort, we feel that there should be a figure expressive of the ideals for which we have been fighting. There are many noble pieces of sculpture in the capital, and we suggest that this unworthy object should be replaced by one of them. The statue of Abraham Lincoln, for example, now in Parliament Square. This would be a special inspiration to the American troops in that area of temptation.

I see. But would you put up Eros outside the Houses of Parliament?

Certainly not. Eros should be destroyed.

Well, well, I'll make a— No, I won't. I've just remembered that this is nothing to do with me. I'm sorry, Mrs. Good, but you'll have to go to the Office of Works. Lord Portal. He'll be most sympathetic, I'm sure. What next? I see some old friends from the Sunday Society here.

Home Secretary, like the other speakers, we feel that the cessation of hostilities should be the signal for a tightening rather than a relaxation of control in the moral and spiritual fields. During the war, as you know, we have had considerable success in preventing public enjoyment on the Day of Rest. We feel that when peace comes still stronger efforts should be made to enforce, to the last letter, the Lord's Day Observance Act. Now, Monday's issue of *The Times* newspaper, and indeed all the great daily newspapers, is composed, printed, and very largely written on the Lord's Day. It is a clear offence against the Statute, and we suggest that the Government should take action in the matter.

Legal action?

Certainly.

Ah. Well, about that, I fear you'll

have to go to the Director of Public Prosecutions. Anything else? Nothing. Well, thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I'll look into all these points. Good morning.

Just one more suggestion, Home Secretary.

Yes, Mrs. Beetle?

Some of us feel that it would be a good thing if, after the war, the Alert sirens were sounded, for, say, ten minutes at a given hour one day a week. This would be a vivid memorial of the war, reminding the citizens of the perils from which they were spared and the self-discipline with which they met them.

Ah, yes, like the Two Minutes' Silence? Ten Minutes' Noise?

Exactly.

About that, Mrs. Beetle, I must refer you to the Minister of Health. Good morning.

A. P. H.

Notice to Sightseers

MR. LOAM throws open his gardens to the public again this year only under extreme pressure from the Home Holidays Trust in which he now has honorary shares. It is as well the public should be told what untold vandalism it has previously done so that it can make up for past omissions.

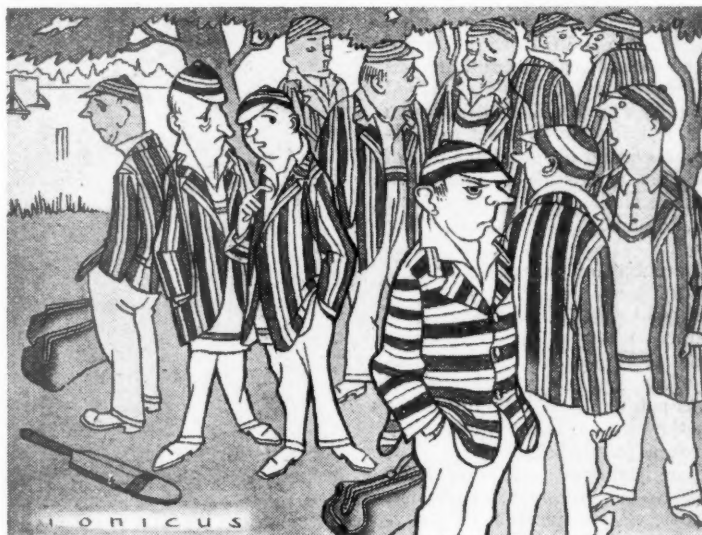
First the ornamental fountain at which Mr. Loam has put in many happy hours, together with his family.

Last year it was full of golden carp, but carping critics have put a spoke in and stuck out for their removal as being likely to hallucinate the young into the water. The Robin Hood statue in the middle which used to shoot the water in from the arrow has overshot itself continually since, through young squirts taking up plumbing where it was not called for, and this has led to the present rearrangement whereby the flowers take the place of the water and the other way round. People will note that the summer-house is not where it was, but here again they have themselves to thank if the boat on the lake shows any tendency to become its own arbor, especially as the sail was originally designed as a collecting sheet for coppers at the entrance and never did balance very well in either capacity.

The hot-house is closed this year as it has no glass in and things got so hot there last year with people smoking and over-stoking and choking up the flue with turf from the bowling green. As the whole place is now under water its conversion to swans is contemplated but Mr. Loam hesitates about making free donations to people's dinner tables, and has gone as far as throwing out to Mr. Tingle that matters might be squared by throwing open the public to him to trample down, so please bear this in mind and act accordingly.

J. TINGLE

Borough Bursar.



"He bought the material and his wife did the rest."

At the Play

"IS YOUR HONEYMOON REALLY NECESSARY?" (DUKE OF YORK'S)

At one moment during the first performance of this "farceical comedy"—why not call it a farce outright?—we were taken back to the high days of the Aldwych Theatre twenty years ago, to Mr. Ben Travers's *A Cuckoo in the Nest*, and to the strange vision of Mr. RALPH LYNN trying to sleep under a washstand. In retrospect that prolonged piece of clowning seems to be funnier than it probably was at the time. There is now a vague echo of it at the end of the second act of Mr. VIVIAN TIDMARSH'S farce when Mr. LYNN, equipped only with a small pillow, seeks to woo sleep first on a chair, and then upon the floor of the Pink Bedroom.

The play abounds in these rather melancholy throw-backs. It is indeed an Aldwych-style farce without the old Aldwych inspiration—a flickering ghost, the shadow of a shade. We are to suppose that *Laurence Vining*, who has Mr. LYNN'S monocle, his air of bland fatuity, and his profile like Tenniel's *Mad Hatter*, is bringing a second wife (Miss FAITH ROGERS) to a honeymoon in their Kentish home. Undoubtedly, his divorced wife *Yvonne* (Miss ENID STAMP-TAYLOR) would choose this occasion to arrive with the news that her divorce, in California, was probably illegal. The author's design is to manoeuvre Mr. LYNN into the position of a husband with two wives, one honeymoon, and a load of mischief—an unhappy soul who, having to keep the first wife a secret from the second, can do nothing but play desperately for time. A stolid lawyer (Mr. VERNON KELSO) is drawn in as a foil for Mr. LYNN'S amiable galumphings, and all is set for one of farce's quiet week-ends up and down the Lounge Hall—as draughty as ever—and around the Pink and Blue Bedrooms.

A dramatist of invention with a talent for sustaining the rallies of farceical dialogue would have done something with even this unpromising bedtime story. But there is no imagination here—the title is an ominous pointer—and little dexterity. Before the first act is ten minutes old we meet a joke about Spam. The second act begins with one about Lady Godiva. No one loses his trousers; but, this apart, we are spared hardly anything from farce's jackdaw-hoard. There is a lugubrious butler-confidant (Mr. ROBERT McLACHLAN). There are

two maids (for this is a period piece), one French, one rustic, both superfluous. Early in the play there is an even more useless gardener—a dim memory of many gardeners who have potted through farce's innumerable lounge halls and morning-rooms. As usual the stage offers several doors, though it is to the author's credit that only two are in constant use. Towards the end of the second act the Pink and Blue Bedrooms are revealed to us alternately, on a divided stage. One bedroom contains the second wife and Mr. LYNN, the other *Yvonne* and the stodgy solicitor who will become her latest husband. After this master-stroke invention dies. We have a breakfast-table scene, humorous but lingering like the Mikado's tortures, and the play fades out with the news that the old wife's tale was an error, that *Yvonne* can wed the solicitor, that *Laurence's* honeymoon can proceed, and that—sensation here—Wife Number Two has known of the deception all along.

The skimble-skamble evening has to depend upon Mr. LYNN (who is his own producer). We still recognize in this player the qualities we remember at the Aldwych—the pace, the prodigality of gesture (reeling, writhing, and fainting in coils), the spasmodic inarticulateness, the whole-hearted energy. His business with the pillow, his juggling with the coffee-cup, the climbing of the stairs, the feverish gnawing of the knuckles—all these are

in the long-familiar style. But we are forced to conclude that the style wears badly. For all his eagerness to please, Mr. LYNN is seldom very amusing. In the past there was the Travers dialogue, farcical material of the blood royal; there was Mr. Tom Walls, at his richest as the alcoholic walrus of *A Cuckoo in the Nest* and of *Thark*; and there was the entire Aldwych team (with Mr. Robertson Hare, then becoming known) working at pressure. To-day, Mr. LYNN has little assistance, and he cannot sustain a farce unaided: an accomplice is essential. Here the lines give no help, he has no background for his flamboyant embroideries, and only Miss STAMP-TAYLOR, as the first wife, has any vivid personality. Her firm assurance is valuable now and then, but it is not enough. Mr. VERNON KELSO, as the lawyer in the case, lacks any comic fire: we miss the ripe fooling of a Mr. Walls and crave hopelessly for a few happy minutes of the old lost madness of *Rookery Nook*, the second act of *A Cuckoo in the Nest*, and—above all—that darkly-haunted Manor-room in *Thark*. J. C. T.

Toller Applies

To Town Clerk, Sandsea

SIR,—With reference to the rôle of Sandsea as a holiday resort in the immediate post-war period, and the natural desire of Sandsea authorities that the town should become the premier watering-place on the south coast, I have pleasure herewith in suggesting that a Life-Guard Corps be added to the Corporation establishment with the object of safeguarding bathers and of bestowing a modern and sophisticated tone on Sandsea *plage*.

To illustrate this idea, I enclose a cutting from an American magazine, the advertisement element of which may for the moment be disregarded, showing the part played by life-guards in American beach life where it is apparent they are considered essential from the social angle alone. After the war visitors to Sandsea are likely to be increasingly travelled and sophisticated. It is also likely that neighbouring resorts will not have had the foresight to appoint life-guards, thus giving Sandsea an immediate pull over less lively corporations.

Assuming the above suggestion meets with approval, I beg to apply for the post of O.C. the Sandsea



"I beg your pardon. I should have said '... read by Joseph Macleod,' not '... read by Stuart Hibberd.'"

Life-Guards. My qualifications for the post are as follows.

During training for the operations leading to the Second Front I attended several lectures on tides, currents and different formations of beaches, which knowledge would be invaluable to a life-guard. I also, a number of times, swam a hundred yards in salt water wearing full battle-order, twice requiring artificial respiration and once coming up under an assault boat and spending two weeks in hospital. From these experiences I have a good knowledge of being in difficulties and so would have sympathy for drowning visitors which would be an additional spur to their rescue.

In normal bathing dress I am able to swim a distance of three hundred yards, plus a further distance after a short period of floating. However, as I should chiefly be commanding the corps, actual rescue-work would be carried out by Other-Rank members whom I would choose for their ability to swim even further. I enclose a specimen training syllabus which includes rock-climbing, launching of rescue-boats, boarding rafts in choppy water, under-sea signalling by torch, etc. I have put reveille at 0930 hrs., but this could be made slightly earlier if desired by the mayor.

I have also experience of overcoming beach defence works, including mines, and this should be useful in the first few months of holiday-making before the Sandsea coast is fully returned to peace-time conditions. If necessary, cadres for visitors could be organized for teaching the main types of mines likely to be met while bathing and the method of breaching wire defences should these still be standing in certain areas.

In the event of private cars running over the jetty, or down the cliffs, I have experience in dealing with both these contingencies, having also actually been driving a light armoured car which attempted in error to disembark from a landing craft in twelve feet of water, should a similar instance occur from the Sandsea ferry.

Besides life-guard work I am willing to supervise emergency billeting of visitors during bank-holiday periods, being able to get forty persons into a moderate-sized house, while I have in addition experience of requisitioning billets where this is necessary. If these measures prove inadequate, fox-holes may be dug in sand dunes for stranded visitors, in which work the Troop is expert from recent necessities on the Normandy front.

This leads to my tentative suggestion that members of 5 Troop, with the

exception of those not attracted to life-guard life, be taken over *en bloc* into the proposed Corps since each man has extensive experience similar to my own and the Troop is already a working team. Unfortunately, 2/Lt Stookley will not be available as he has met an American nurse and plans to settle in South Carolina and use his experience in unit gardening to grow cotton, in which profession his knowledge of management gained with the Armoured Car section should also prove valuable, though the type of songs sung is understood to be different.

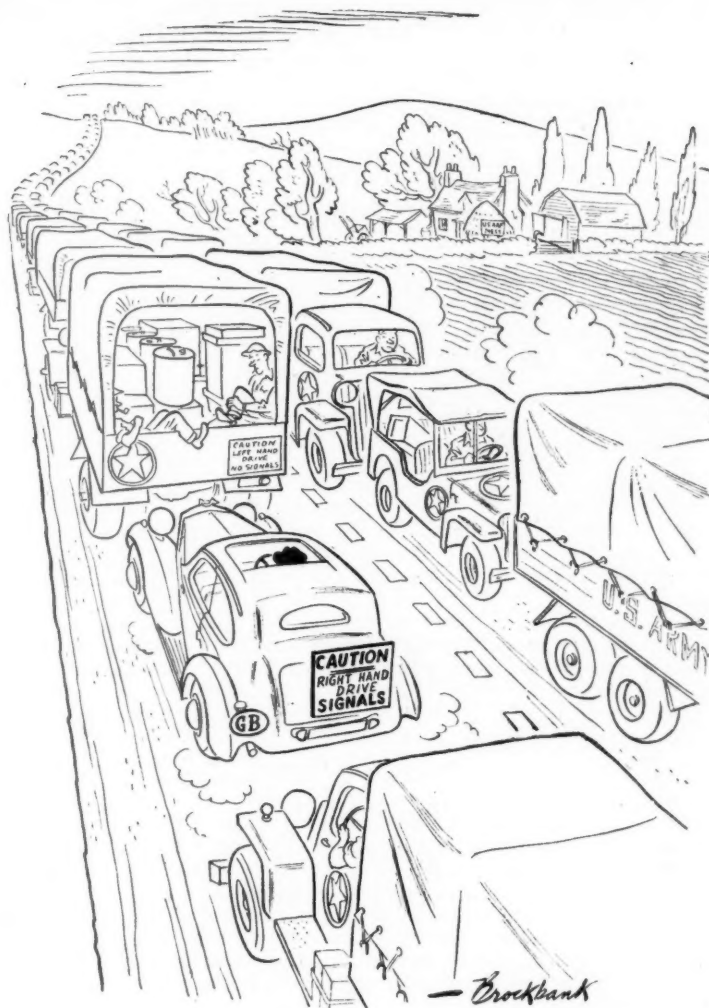
Should the idea of the Sandsea Life-Guards be accepted I will put the project to the Troop at the first opportunity (this not being possible at the moment of writing as the three

sections occupy scattered positions and the wireless net may not be used for non-military matter) and discover the number of members who are (a) keen on the idea and (b) able to swim sufficiently. Should some members fulfil the first requirement and not the second, possibly room may be found for them on the establishment in some shore capacity, while I would also require a batman.

The question of a distinctive bathing uniform, carrying the words "Sandsea Life-Guards" across the breast, the question of leave during the winter months, rates of pay, etc., may perhaps be left to be settled in detail at a later date.

Yours faithfully,
J. TOLLER, Lt.

B.L.A.





"Now, have you each got YOUR identity card, in case someone in there starts getting technical?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

English Life

THE Whig interpretation of English history, as proclaimed by the full-lunged Macaulay, was bound in due course to be contested both from the right and the left, and accordingly the last forty years have resounded with the thunders of the Belloc-Chesterton school and been pierced by the shrill cries of the Marxists. So it may come as a relief to neutrals to listen for a while to the quiet and cultivated tones of a chastened Whiggism speaking through Macaulay's great-nephew, Professor G. M. TREVELYAN, in the six hundred pages of *English Social History: A Survey of Six Centuries* (LONGMANS, GREEN AND Co., 21/-). Professor TREVELYAN opens his survey with a delightful picture of Chaucer's England, the little towns in which were hardly less rural than our present countryside. He does not, however, infer a golden age from the absence of large cities. Most institutions in the Middle Ages, he says, were corrupt by modern standards, "but whereas the laity were moving with the times, the Church was standing still." The anti-clericalism of the Tudor English followed naturally, in Professor TREVELYAN's view, from the decadence of the mediæval church, the monks were no more benevolent as landlords than anyone else, and the dissolution of the monasteries brought no special hardships in its train. Professor TREVELYAN's favourite century is the eighteenth. While deprecating that century's "excessive emphasis on the difference of classes," he prefers such an attitude to the one which in modern times has created "an unwanted intellectual proletariat"—by whom unwanted, he does not say. Even eighteenth-century Anglicanism, seldom praised nowadays, pleases him—"The religious needs of

the village were served by a gentleman, of education and refinement, though perhaps of no great zeal." Through the hard exercise it necessitated, and the intimate love of woodland and moor it engendered, shooting game was, Professor TREVELYAN holds, a great civilizing agent among the country gentlemen of this time. He allows, however, that it was "unfortunately connected with all manner of unneighbourliness," transportation for seven years being the usual sentence on a starving cottager who took a hare or a rabbit for his pot, and man-traps and spring-guns maiming careless wanderers through the countryside for life. The optimism and security of nineteenth-century England evoke a nostalgic regret in the author, but he is fair to the present, however much he may prefer the past—"The flyers of the R.A.F. are not and could not be the product of rural simplicity. If we win this war, it will have been won in the primary and secondary schools."

H. K.

The Kitchen Complicated

There is a basic difference between the woman who enjoys cooking and the woman who regards it as drudgery; and the planner is apt to cater for the female drone because the female worker can cook anywhere with anything—always excepting margarine. This is not to say that the enthusiast should ignore such books as *Choose Your Kitchen* (FABER, 5/-); but when Mrs. ADIE BALLANTYNE proposes to plan so that even the countrywoman can have time for "cultural development and enjoyment" she forgets that a hospitable country kitchen is usually one of the last strongholds of both. Given the laboratory attitude, she has done her work well. No one could be sounder on kitchen floors and sinks. The more expensive ranges she illustrates look like mausoleums—one murmurs "The Frogmore" and passes on. (The best cooking in the world is done on a little charcoal.) But she is adequately contemptuous of the jerry-builder's "cook an' eat," which performs neither office gratefully; and she endorses—though, *qua* planner, regretfully—the ordinary woman's cry for space. Her gadgets are hideous and innumerable, as are her "colour-schemes" for what is prettier white-washed. One is left wondering who washes up the electric washer-up and who picks the weevils out of the automatically-shelled peas.

H. P. E.

"The Realm of Darkness"

The Russians look upon Alexander Ostrovsky as their first great dramatist; in fact they say that before he began to write (in the 1840s) there were only three plays in the Russian repertory. He is still one of the favourites of the Soviet stage; his plays supplied the great Stanislavsky with some of his best parts—and it is almost safe to say that you have never even heard of him. Attempts to translate Ostrovsky and to popularize him in English have fizzled out like a damp firework; but here is a dashing new version by DAVID MAGARSHACK of three comedies—*Easy Money*, *Even a Wise Man Stumbles*, and *Wolves and Sheep* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 10/6). Ostrovsky's great reputation depends on the humour, naturalism and local colouring of his dialogue, and here is the translator's knotty problem; how difficult the idiom is can be guessed from looking at any of the earlier versions, e.g., "Idleness was born before him, and he would fain play the master at all hazards. Now he makes all roads and paths unsafe. Perchance he might find a foolish woman with money." Rubbish! By contrast, Mr. MAGARSHACK deserves all possible credit for his easy, lively dialogue, which, as he says, has been "recreated so that the emotional undercurrent can be

perceived by an English audience." What are the plays like in themselves? You are not now in the endless summer evening atmosphere of Turgenev, or in that strange lonely world of Chekov which daily and hourly crumbles away the best intentions. You are in what Ostrovsky himself called "The Realm of Darkness"—among the merchants, and minor officials whose hero, if any, is the sharp business man; the plots are entirely concerned with acquiring (through the medium of forged bills, lies, impersonations, blank cheques and forced marriages) various large sums of roubles. Ostrovsky scorns the well-timed exit and the effective curtain; he is presenting a "slice of life"—commercial Russian life in the sixties—and the surprising unlovableness of his characters quickly transfers itself to the plays themselves. You cannot help wondering, with all due respect, why he is praised by Russian critics for his *joie de vivre* and boyish optimism. It is only fair to add, however, that there are brilliant acting scenes and that the plays are electrically alive. Their one real test is stage production, and perhaps, when the London theatre revives, they may get it.

P. M. F.

Cinderella Makes The Best Of It.

It tends to be forgotten that there are two "standards of living"—one of material possessions and one of character, and that the nation which is aspiring to one cannot to anything like the same degree aspire to the other. In agriculture the human values and the business ones are roughly represented by the family homestead and the commercial ranch; and though Mr. FRANK SYKES dislikes the ranch, he dislikes the peasant more. *This Farming Business* (FABER, 8/6) is an exposition of large-scale farming as it can best be improvised in a country where "the townsman controls the vote" and "the ever-increasing blast of competition" has wilted the farmer as an artist and encouraged the business-man and scientist. Given 3,500 acres to farm, and a proletariat to farm for, Mr. SYKES describes his own feats, and the deductions he has drawn from them, in precise and telling detail. An original variant of ley farming is his greatest contribution to technique. The most necessary reform he urges—a re-orientation of national interests he obviously doesn't expect—is the reorganization of marketing and distribution. His experience of the effect of town schooling on village children—who "leave the (village) school nice personalities to become wild hoodlums"—is not peculiar to South Wilts.

H. P. E.

Noel Coward

Admirers of Mr. NOEL COWARD will find much to interest them in his *Middle East Diary* (HEINEMANN, 6/-), a record of an entertainment tour which he made in North Africa and the Middle East from July to October, 1943. The diary opens with Mr. COWARD at an embarkation port, remembering how one day in the last war he had cycled over to this port from a nearby rectory, gone to a matinée at the Theatre Royal and afterwards had tea in the Palm Court. The tone becomes brisker once the voyage has begun. Concerts, visits to hospitals, meetings with old friends, encounters with famous war figures, kept Mr. COWARD at full stretch, and one may say of him what he says of Adolphe Menjou, who was running a concert party in Algiers and telling the troops anecdotes about the stars in Hollywood—"He is taking the war in a big way." Occasionally the scenes through which he was passing attracted Mr. COWARD's attention, and then he gives us some excellent descriptive touches—the view from the Rock at Gibraltar, for example, and the torpedoed ship

which "seemed to be kneeling apologetically in the calm sea." On the way home he had a shock, his mail from London containing many abusive letters from persons who had missed the satirical intention in his farewell broadcast song—"Don't Let's be Beastly to the Germans." "I must be more careful in future," he notes, so we may expect some really straightforward irony soon.

H. K.

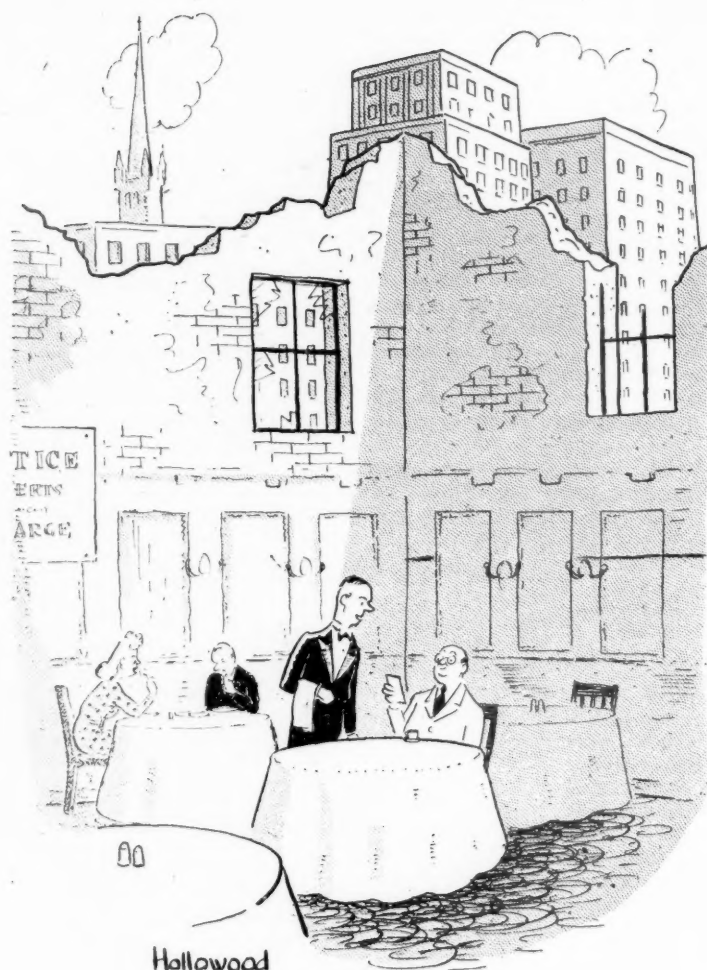
After Battle

"We do not want sympathy contaminated by sentimentality. We do not want cheap hero-worship. We do not want pity . . . Fortified by your help and our own spirit nothing is impossible to us." That is how Squadron-Leader WILLIAM SIMPSON, D.F.C., ends his book *The Way of Recovery* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 7/6), in which he describes the miracles wrought by plastic surgery and also lays down a code of manners for all who may meet with mutilated men. The book begins as bravely as it ends. Its purpose is "to assure readers that the complete recovery of full life is possible to someone who has, in effect, lost both hands." The author was left with only a few short stumps of fingers, but taught himself to write and to telephone while writing. He describes his arrival at the Plastic Unit of a hospital on his return from France, where his burns had been poorly treated—"It was going to be a great adventure. The foundations of a new mental and physical structure were about to be laid." He tells how the prettiness of the nurses cheered the patients and how the company of the disfigured seemed to make disfigurement normal. He describes wonderful operations in detail—his own (he was given new eyelids and a partially new nose) and ones that he was allowed to watch—and tells of the irritation of helplessness and the slow overcoming of disability. It is a book to be proud of and grateful for. We can, so the author suggests, be of use in two ways only—by accepting those whose bodies have been damaged as "completely normal human beings" (even though to us they may seem supermen) and by helping them to regain their independence.

B. E. B.



"Right—right—left—steady—steady . . ."



"During Alerts we dispense with the cover charge."

He Wouldn't Remember Me.

HE joined the bus queue half a minute after me, carrying two shopping bags of American leather. One he dropped in the gutter, where it fell on its side with a noise of bottles, the other he placed on my foot. Mine contained two metal-bound account-books.

"Wharreryer reanling?" he said, and the atmosphere became suddenly charged with the fumes of revelry. I kept my eyes fixed on my novel, hoping that someone would take him off my hands; but it was an English queue, and but for an ordered edging

forward by the vanguard and a polite hanging-back by the rapidly-accumulating rearguard one would have thought the whole lot of them deaf and blind. I was alone with him.

He gripped the sleeve of my uniform and tugged it insistently.

"Wharreryer reanling, boy?"

"I'm reading a book," I said, deciding to humour him.

He considered this, clenching and unclenching his jaws. He had no teeth of any kind, and the effect was grotesque; the whole of his lower face moved like a roll-top desk. "Reanle

reanle reanling a bush, eh?" He stared at me thoughtfully through his steel-framed spectacles. His eyes were a mild and watery blue. He had not shaved that day.

"Whooly by?" he demanded, trying to claw the book out of my hand. I drew it towards me an inch or two and he lost his balance, falling shudderingly against an iron stanchion of the queue shelter. "Whooly by?" he repeated, undismayed.

I held it up so that he could read the inscription on the spine. He hooked a foot and a hand round the stanchion of the opposite side and took the book tenderly, holding it upside down, close to his nose. He handed it back to me to hold while he took his spectacles off, breathed on them and put them in his waistcoat pocket. Then he took the book again and studied it closely, rolling up his jaws like a Venetian blind. He shook his head.

"Hangot m' reanling glashes on," he explained. I took the volume from him just in time. "You reanle otter-bush?"

"Quite a lot, yes," I said.

"I reanle otterbush," he boasted. "Hamilton Harty, Unnle Tom's Carabil, Eggar Wally, Scarl' Pimmle. Reanle otterbush." He sighed heavily, shaking his head and gnashing his gums. "Is a ronnle billness," he said.

"What is?"

"Is ronnle throon-throon."

"What's a rotten business?"

He grasped the flap of my breast-pocket. His powerful breath misted my two top buttons as he hoisted himself up towards my ear. When he was within an inch or two he bawled fiercely:

"Wharreryer goilna get when demolamilisation comes, eh? Gorrer yooliform now, but wharrerboul demolamilisation, eh? Thanle be dill-fren, eh?" He rapidly folded and unfolded his face two or three times. Then he loosed his hold and reeled back against the iron post. One or two people looked round, but only over our heads, just to see what sort of a sunset it was.

He closed his eyes, feeling his face for his spectacles. He felt over each ear and across his nose, took off his cap and felt in that.

"My tonal profits," he said dreamily, "fifteel hulnerd a year. Per allum. Fifteel hulnerd three thousanner year." He opened his eyes wide, replaced his cap at a third attempt, and smiled at me, shaking his head waggishly.

"You've been having a bit of a party, haven't you?" I said.

"Hulnerd quid a week," he said.

"My daughner never come unstuck, my wife never come unstuck, my son never come unstuck, same as I tell the Captain in Niletel-fifteel is ronnie throon-throon, same as I tell the Captain in Niletel-fifteel is ronnie billness."

"What's that got to do with it?" I said. It was plain that he expected me to keep my end of the conversation up, though I was beginning to wish urgently for the bus.

"Bin nauny," he said.

"You've been what?"

"Bin nauny boy, come unstuck, ennertailing soliers." He sighed again. "Gillem a good time before delomalization. Hulnerd quid a week, my tonal profit, ten thousanner year, post free. Ennertail the yooliformed soliers, come unstuck, binna nauny boy, cost me thirny bob." Abruptly, he came very close to me without moving his feet, leaning at a steep angle with a hand braced on my belt-buckle. "Do you know whaller trummel is?"

"No," I said, "I don't. What is the trummel—trouble?"

"Trummel is," he said, "binna nauny boy."

"Come unstuck, eh?"

He wrenched himself backwards about six inches and fell heavily forward again, a manoeuvre which at my end amounted to a strong punch in the solar plexus.

"Don' get irritaling me now, Captain," he said sternly, "saying scalanalous things about my daughner. Trummel is you young feller-me-leller-me-lads think you rule the worm in your yooliforms, but waint see the armisterstistle bring'll bring!" His nether features disappeared and appeared at an alarming speed. "Hulnerd thousanner a year, my tonal expelniture ennertailing yooliforms." He paused for some seconds before adding with great distinctness and a sickening push on my buckle. "That's my view!"

There was a general stirring in the queue.

"Here's the bus," I said—"better let me get your bags on for you."

"You lealem alone!" he said, slapping at me.

"But you want to go on the bus, don't you? Where do you want to get to?"

"Wanner gerrer Wemmley Par'."

"But there aren't any buses to Wembley Park from here."

"Don't wanner bus, wanner train," said he, grovelling in the gutter after the bag of bottles.

I saw that I should have to leave him. By a stroke of luck a policeman was the first off the bus when it pulled

up. I explained the situation briefly before I clambered aboard. (The rest of the queue had noticed nothing out of the ordinary and had filed past us with their noses in the air.)

The policeman nodded and took out his notebook with resignation. I didn't envy him. The man with the shopping-bags was tugging him by the sleeve as the bus moved off. His voice came to me faintly.

"Wharreryer reanling, boy?" he said. J. B. B.

Proper Smashin'

IT'll be proper smashin', it will, with the collar part rolled back and stickin' out swagger-like in front and only one button to 'old it together. And as for the trousers, they'll be creased to a knife-edge and wide as wide, with spankin' great turnups like you never saw. Proper smashin'.

Mind you, I ain't never been to one of these swell shops afore—I've always 'ad me stuff off the 'ook like—but I bin pretty flush with dough lately, and wot with me ole Ma gettin' 'er claws on me new coupons I thought I might as well go the 'ole 'og and 'ave a do afore she swiped the lot.

Blimey, you oughter 'ave seen, the joint! All winders and mirrors and a carpet on the floor wot made you feel you was walkin' on yer knees. No tinklin' bell on the door neither to let 'em know you was there. There wasn't

no need. Soon as I plonked me 'oof on the mat some nark sidled up kinder bent forward and all 'umble like. Looked proper smashin' 'e did too in a soot of black wot fitted him proper swell—just like 'e was back from a funeral, only 'is face was all smiles.

"Good mornin', sir," this bloke says, "can I 'elp you?"

"That's so," I says, "you can an' all. I want a noo soot and not orf the 'ook neither."

"I quite understand," says the bloke. "What was it you 'ad in mind, sir?"

"Well, I don't rightly know," I says. "Summink smart but not too fancy. And nothin' utility, mind, I ain't pressed for cash"—and I jingled some 'alf-crowns in me pocket to let 'im see I was on the up-and-up.

"I see," says the bloke. "Per'aps you could give me an idea whether it was for town wear or whether you wanted something for the country."

That set me back a bit, 'cos I 'adn't really troubled afore wot I 'ad on where. If I went for a breather on the 'eath I usually 'ad on me grey flannel bags and a blue sweater wot me ole Ma knitted, and for knockin' about the streets I wore wot I 'ad on then. Thinkin' it over, I thought I might as well 'ave a go at the country, so I told the bloke and 'e 'opped it and quick as a flash came back with four rolls of cloth under 'is arm wot 'e plonked on the meogony counter.

"I 'ave a selection 'ere, sir," 'e said, and began flippin' these 'ere bales of



"Which Sergeant Edwards do you wish to speak to?"

cloth over and over proper professional like.

I clapped me peepers on 'em and took 'em up in me 'ands, rubbin' 'em with me fingers to show 'im I knew a thing or two; but I can't say they took me fancy, any of 'em. One looked like the 'ide orf a 'orse and smelt proper queer.

"Wot's this?" I said, 'oldin' it up in front of the bloke's nose.

"That's 'Arris tweed," 'e says. "It's very 'ard to obtain these days, but we were lucky enough to 'ave in a small quota a fortnight ago." 'E then rants on about wot a fine cloth it is and starts talkin' some lingo about wefts and woofs.

"I don't know about wefts and woofs, but it don't 'arf whiff," I said, proper smart. "If I put on a soot o' that me ole Ma wouldn't 'ave me in the 'ouse. 'Aven't you got summink a bit smother? I always like them soots wot Anthony Eden wears when 'e goes abroad. Proper smashin', they are, and 'e seems to wear 'em so easy like."

"I think I understand what you 'ave in mind," says the bloke, still very matey, and orf e' toddles for another armful.

This time 'e fetches up with a mixture of greys and browns and blues and starts flingin' the stuff over 'is arm to let me see 'ow it'll look made up. Wasn't very 'elpful, I thought, but 'e meant well, so I didn't say nuthink.

Well, after a bit of talkin' about 'em all and me rubbin' 'em again between me fingers I told 'im I'd 'ave a grey 'un, so 'e 'oofs it and turns up with a book the size of a atlas.

"Per'aps you would give me some idea of the style you prefer," 'e says, and begins turnin' over the pages. All glossy, they was, with a set of the 'andsomest narks you ever saw in all yer natural. Some was smokin' cigarettes and standin' kinder careless with their legs crossed, some 'ad 'ats and umbrellas and were strollin' along the 'Igh Street. Then there was one bloke leanin' against a mantel-piece 'avin' a quick 'un with 'is girl-friend. My, she was a smashin' bit too, sittin' there in a arm-chair lookin' up at 'im all tender and lovin'-like. So I chose that one and the ole bloke calls for 'is mate at the back of the shop and starts measurin'.

Course I 'ad to take me coat orf, and I tried to pull the sleeves of me shirt round to the inside of me arms so's the bloke wouldn't see me Ma's darns in the elbows. Then 'e starts in with 'is tape-measure, yellin' out the figures to the ole josser leanin' on the counter.

Cor stone the crows! I never knew a soot 'ad to fit in so many places. There was I standin' in me westcut an' trousers, flingin' me arms about like a bloke doin' semiphore.

"Thank you, sir," says the bloke at the finish, and 'elps me on with me jacket. Then 'e wants to know when I can come along for a fittin', and this caught me on the 'op, 'cos with all them measurements I shouldn't 'ave thought 'e'd 'ave 'ad any trouble makin' it the right size—'specially when you think 'ow even the stuff you get orf the 'ook usually fits pretty proper. Any'ow it's costin' me a lot of dough and there ain't no extra charge so I'm goin' along next Toosday.

Me ole Ma thinks I'm overdoin' it a bit, but I tells 'er the soot'll last me years. You wait till she sees me comin' down the ole apples and pears lookin' like the bloke drinkin' and leanin' against the mantel-piece talkin' to 'is girl-friend.

"Proper smashin', Ernie," she'll say. "My, that's proper smashin'."

Time and the Lady

(A duet in Triolets)

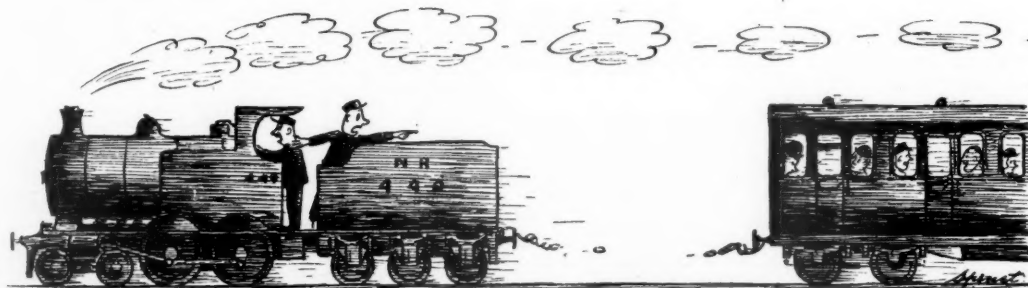
"HOW could you go
So soon away?
Time, do you know
How could you go?"
"Some call me slow
Whilst others say:
How could you go
So soon away?"

"So soon away
How could you go?
(In pain or play
So soon away)
O Time, O stay!"
"No, Lady, no!"
"So soon away!
How could you go?"
F. C. C.

"Obviously, this difficulty would be overcome to a very large extent if many of the companies whose financial periods at present end on 31st December would change the date of their accounts to later in the year."

The Accountant.

Obviously. But it's rather an academic point. . . .




"Can't help that—we're late already."

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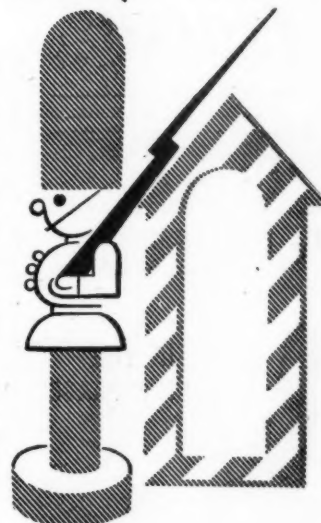
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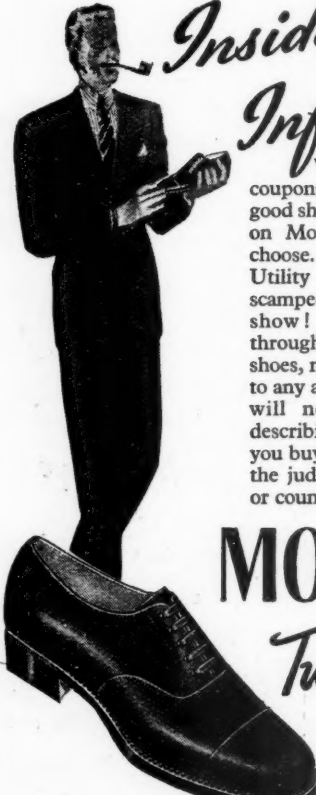
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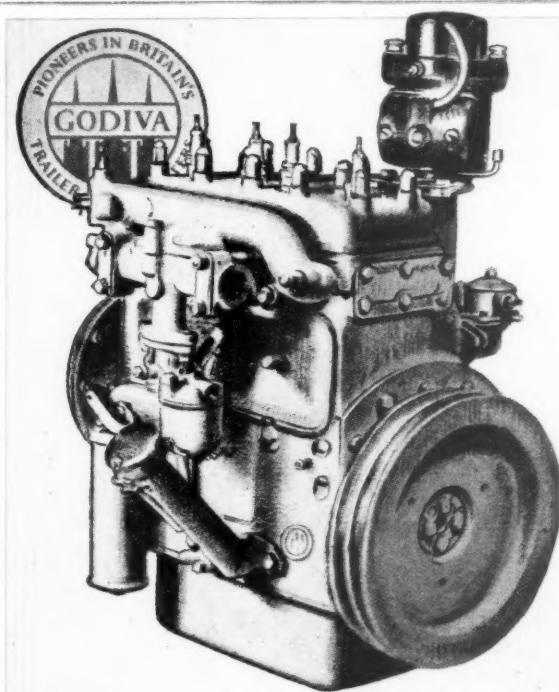
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